

research snapshot

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D.R.P.I. Promotes and Protects the Rights of People With Disabilities Through Monitoring

What is this research about?

Disability Rights Promotion International (D.R.P.I.) (www.yorku.ca/drpi) is a collaborative project. Its goal is to put in place a global system to monitor the human rights of people with disabilities. D.R.P.I.'s Coordination Centre is based at York University but the project involves partners from across Canada and around the world. It began in 2000.

What did the researchers do?

The first phase, ending in 2003, provided an inventory of opportunities in which international human rights instruments can be used to enforce disability rights. It also looked at different types of monitoring tools and training resources used in other human rights projects to see if they could be applied to the disability context.

In the second phase, ending in 2009, a broad range of tools, methods, and instruments to monitor disability rights were developed and field-tested in pilot projects in Canada and around the world.

The third phase, currently underway, involves establishing regional disability rights monitoring centres in 5 geographic regions along with holistic monitoring projects in several countries. Holistic monitoring involves collecting and

What you need to know:

D.R.P.I. is working to protect and promote the rights of people with disabilities through monitoring.

considering data from three sources: individual experiences of people with disabilities; laws, policies and programs related to disability rights; and societal attitudes toward disability. Including individual experiences and societal attitudes is an innovative approach to human rights monitoring that has been pioneered by the D.R.P.I. project. The regional centres and country projects will be run by organizations of people with disabilities. The third phase will firmly establish a strong and sustainable global network of disability rights monitors.

D.R.P.I. is currently working with more than forty partners. These include organizations of people with disabilities, human rights NGOs, university research institutes, human rights institutions, and government agencies. In order to make its findings public, D.R.P.I. is creating a number of resources. Virtual knowledge networks, oral presentations, written texts, a web site, list serv as well as local communities and partner disability organizations will all help to mobilize

knowledge.

What did the researchers find?

People who had just recalled some unethical personal behaviour – and whose minds had just been occupied with justifying bad behaviour – marked off larger areas on the colour spectrum than those who had not recalled bad behaviour. That is, when asked to identify where, on a rainbow, the colour ‘blue’ began and ended, these people included more shades of ‘purple.’ They tolerated a larger definition of the colour ‘blue’. In other words, a mind that has been working to justify unethical behaviour continues to work in this assimilative way for some time afterward. And its ability to make fine distinctions is potentially impaired.

How can you use this research?

D.R.P.I. has developed tools and training materials designed to be used by individuals and organizations interested in gathering evidence about the human rights situation of persons with disabilities including disability organizations, human rights activists, policy makers, the media, academics and students.. The evidence collected through monitoring and contained in project reports can be used to support advocacy for systemic change, raise awareness about violations of disability rights and report to international human rights monitoring bodies. Anyone with an interest in research on disability rights will find D.R.P.I. to be a useful resource.

About the Researchers

D.R.P.I. is guided by an international Advisory Committee and Co-Directors Bengt Lindqvist and Marcia Rioux. Rita Samson, is the Project Coordinator of the international D.R.P.I. project

and Mihaela Dinca-Panaitescu the Coordinator of D.R.P.I.- Canada. Marcia Rioux is Director of the York Institute for Health Research (Y.I.H.R.) at York University and teaches in the graduate program in Critical Disability Studies. Bengt Lindqvist lives in Sweden and was the UN Special Rapporteur on Disability from 1994-2003.

D.R.P.I. receives its funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). It is also supported by the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (S.S.H.R.C.), the Heritage, York University, Laval University, and the University of New York, Buffalo, as well as other organizations.

drpi.research.yorku.ca/

Keywords

Disability, Disability rights, D.R.P.I., Human rights, Monitoring, United Nations

Knowledge Mobilization at York

York’s Knowledge Mobilization Unit provides services for faculty, graduate students, community and government seeking to maximize the impact of academic research and expertise on public policy, social programming, and professional practice. This summary has been supported by the Office of the Vice-President Research and Innovation at York and project funding from SSHRC and CIHR.

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